

# RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE – 2008 BUSINESS PLAN



## Spencer Gulf Rural Health School (SGRHS)

A joint initiative of the University of South Australia and University of Adelaide

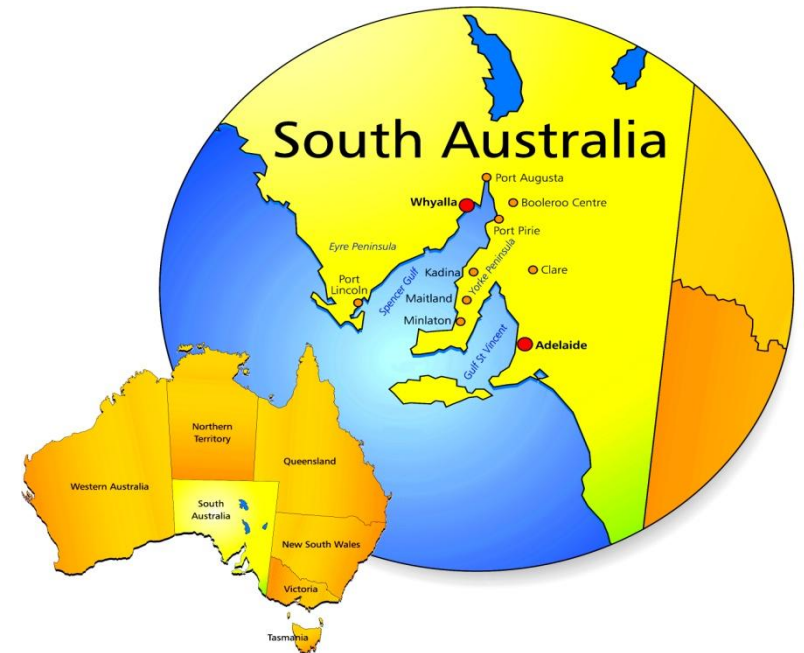
Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation & Development (PHC RED) Strategy

## INTRODUCTION

The PHC-RED program at the Spencer Gulf Rural Health School is located within the SGRHS Research Strategy and is central to the Centre for Rural Health and Community Development. Associate Professor Gary Misan is Head of Research at SGRHS and will also assume responsibility for the SGRHS PHC-RED Program in 2008. It is envisaged that Ms Elana Rudnik will continue as SGRHS Co-ordinator into 2008.

In 2008, it is anticipated that the SGRHS PHC-RED program will provide support to community based researchers and prospective higher degree research students (HDR) in the SGRHS catchment which includes learning centres located in SA's Yorke Peninsula, Mid-North, Spencer Gulf, Barossa Valley and Eyre Peninsula.

- The key targets for the program include General Practitioners and Divisions of General Practice;
- Aboriginal communities, organisations and individuals involved in health development (health development is defined as community-based primary health care, health promotion and primary prevention activities);
- Nurses, allied health practitioners, health managers, health planners, community-based psychiatrists.
- Community residents involved in health development, and
- Primary health care undergraduate and honours students



The SGRHS PHC-RED program is well placed for continuing success given the existing networks and collaborative relationships with early/mid career researchers and policy makers in our region. We have strong partnerships with the University of Adelaide's Faculty of Health Sciences, University of South Australia's Division of Health Sciences and the UniSA Centre for Rural Health and Community Development, based in Whyalla. The program will aim to identify and support individuals in our catchment who, with appropriate support, are likely to become competent and productive primary health care researchers. By aligning the PHC RED program with the SGRHS research we believe we can more closely create opportunities for links between research, practice and policy and stronger support by SGRHS research staff for community based PHC research.

Our strategies for 2008 are consistent with the national PHC-RED objectives and aim to:

- Up-skill early or mid career researchers to produce high quality primary health care research;
- Support the advancement of sustainable careers in primary health care research;
- Conduct policy and practice relevant research in specific topic areas, and
- Pursue the uptake of research into policy by relevant organisations

The activities will include the appointment of up to three part time Research Development Placements (RDP's) with at least one of them expected to be combining primary care practice with the part time research placement. Research themes and programs will incorporate investigator driven research areas and industry need. Research Training Scholarships will provide opportunities to primary health practitioners, policy makers and early – mid career researchers to apply for financial support to attend a primary health care research related training, present at a conference or research activity.

Indigenous research capacity building will remain a focus of our activities and we will conduct this in partnership with the Aboriginal Health Council, CRHaCD, CCRE, University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia.

### **Spencer Gulf Rural Health School (SGRHS), South Australia**

The Spencer Gulf Rural Health School (SGRHS) is a regional school of health science created as a joint initiative of the University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia. The SGRHS comprises a multi-disciplinary team of experienced health professionals and key support staff. Staff have a range of backgrounds including medicine, nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy, mental health, Aboriginal health, social work, administration, business and finance, public service, education, clerical and information technology.

The administrative and research concentrations of the school are located in Whyalla at the Whyalla campus of the University of South Australia. SGRHS has a number of learning centres that have been established in association with a number of primary and secondary health care services of SA's Eyre and Yorke Peninsula's including at Port Lincoln, Pt Augusta, Pt Pirie, Clare, Kadina and Maitland.

The purpose of the SGRHS is to "... conduct education and research to improve the health of rural and remote communities..." It does this by providing quality placements for undergraduate and post graduate students; by assisting in the planning and establishment of effective models of health service delivery; by conducting research and evaluation to improve the health of rural South Australians, and; by providing education, training and support of existing health professionals in the region.

The SGRHS provides a wide range of consultancy and support services to the rural and remote health sector and has experience in many health service areas including Aboriginal Health Services. SGRHS activities include research and consultancy, education and training, and facilitation of clinical service delivery. SGRHS' research work has a population health focus with activity in the areas of

chronic disease, including self-management and peer support, Aboriginal health, mental health and community participation in health. SGRHS is an affiliate of the ATN Centre for Metabolic Fitness (CMF), the Nutritional Physiology Research Centre (NPRC) and is a partner in the Centre for Rural Health and Community Development (CRHaCD). The SGRHS is also affiliated with a national network of rural researchers, clinicians and academics through FRAME and ARHEN which represent the national network of Rural Clinical Schools and University Departments of Rural Health, respectively.

The SGRHS in association with the Whyalla campus has established state of the art facilities for assessing body composition (Lunar Prodigy DEXA), physical and cardiovascular fitness (Cardiac profiler) and has a fully equipped gymnasium that provides facilities to enable implementation of guided aerobic and resistance training and exercise. Current SGRHS areas of research interest include:

- Prevalence of chronic disease and chronic disease risk factors including the familial, socio cultural and environmental determinants of chronic disease, chronic disease risk factors and health behaviours.
- Community based studies to counter overweight and obesity and mitigate risk factors of chronic disease (CVD, diabetes, respiratory disease).
- Implementation and impact of community based chronic disease self-management programs, including in mental health, and their integration into mainstream health services.
- Quality use of medicines in rural communities.
- Men's health and endocrinology of male ageing.
- Epidemiology of osteoporosis and lung disease in rural South Australia.
- Child and maternal health and early detection and management of chronic disease in Aboriginal communities.
- Factors that influence community participation in health.
- Rural Health Workforce.

Whyalla is South Australia's 2<sup>nd</sup> largest regional town with the only University Campus (UniSA) outside Adelaide with a health focus. Whyalla has the largest percentage of people over the age of 65 in SA outside Adelaide, a proportion of Aboriginal people above the State average and a mix of some 60 ethnic groups. The population has higher than State average rates of obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer. Being generally representative of the SA population profile it is expected that successful models, programs and other outputs from research in Whyalla will be applicable to other regions in South Australia and beyond.

### **Centre of Rural Health and Community Development (CRHaCD)**

CRHaCD, a University of South Australia research centre, has 9 key researchers, three research fellows, and more than 30 additional members, most of whom are CRE or SGRHS academic or research staff. CRHaCD receives performance-based infrastructure funding

from UniSA and project funding from government, industry, non-government organisations, Cooperative Research Centres, the Australian Research Council, and other Australian Competitive Grant programs. The Centre is based at Whyalla Campus and has researchers at other locations in rural South Australia, including Mount Gambier and Port Lincoln.

The CRHaCD has three research themes and 11 research programs. The Centre's Research Themes and programs align closely with those of SGRHS and include:

### **Theme 1: Sustainable communities and livelihoods in rural and remote places**

- Program 1 - Rural social care, including human services and social work
- Program 2 - Community development.
- Program 3 - Regional Development.

### **Theme 2: Health and wellbeing in rural and remote communities**

- Program 1 - Community health development, including primary health care, health services evaluation and planning, community participation in health.
- Program 2 - Population health to improve physical and metabolic fitness and reduce risk factors for chronic disease, including mental illness and obesity.
- Program 3 - Prevention and management, including self-management, of chronic illness, including mental illness.
- Program 4 - Palliative care and aged care

### **Theme 3: Indigenous health**

- Program 1 - Heart, mind, and body - emotional, spiritual, and physical wellbeing of Indigenous people and its relationship with chronic disease and mental health
- Program 2 - Birthing, mothering, and grand-mothering
- Program 3 - Indigenous understandings of community and community development, including Increasing community participation in Aboriginal Health Services.
- Program 4 - Developing, trialling, and using Indigenous research methodologies.

## Abbreviations

ATN CMF	Australian Technology Network Centre Metabolic Fitness
CCRE	Centre Clinical Research Excellence
CRE	Centre Regional Engagement
DGP	Divisions of General Practice
GGT	Greater Green Triangle
HACC	Home and Community Care
HDR	Higher Degree Research
NPRC	Nutritional Physiology Research Centre
NT	Northern Territory
RDP	Research Development Placement
SA	South Australia
SGRHS	Spencer Gulf Rural Health School

## Contacts

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**OBJECTIVE 1: To increase the pool of primary health care researchers by up-skilling early-mid career researchers and supporting the sustainable advancement of research careers in primary health care**

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS
<p><b>Providing learning opportunities to early or mid career researchers to conduct high quality research<sup>1</sup> in Primary Health Care</b></p>	<p>Disseminate information about the research capacity building program to primary health care practitioners and policy makers throughout the Spencer Gulf Region.</p> <p>Recruit and appoint RDP's</p> <p>Devise an individualised research capacity building plan for each RDP participant, including learning outcomes and resources required</p> <p>RDP's to complete pre and post placement questionnaires</p> <p>Provide information about HDR study pathways to RDP's and PHC industry networks</p> <p>Enrol RDP's in formal research training units eg. Grad Cert in Research Methodology</p> <p>Promote details of research training scholarships and grants</p> <p>Provide financial assistance for primary health care practitioners to attend research related</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compendium of promotional material and activity record</li> <li>• Number of RDP's recruited</li> <li>• Individualised development Plan for each RDP</li> <li>• Completed pre and post placement questionnaire</li> <li>• Number of HDR information sessions</li>   <li>• Number enrolled in formal research training</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Research refers to research evaluation and research

<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>INDICATORS</b>
	<p>conference or training</p> <p>Provide research training including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative methods</li> <li>• Quantitative methods</li> <li>• Research ethics</li> <li>• Statistical analysis</li> <li>• Writing for publication</li> <li>• Preparing research posters</li> </ul> <p>Organise and promote monthly Journal Club activities in Whyalla and Pt Lincoln.</p> <p>Contribute to and promote the CRHaCD Research Seminars.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of research scholarship and grant applications</li> <li>• Number of HDR and formal research enrolments in 08/09</li> <li>• Number of applicants for research training scholarships</li> <li>• List of funded research training</li> <li>• List of Journal Club Activities</li> <li>• CRHaCD research seminar program</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support the sustainable advancement of PHC research careers</b></p>	<p>Collaborate with agencies and professional networks who employ or support PHC practitioners to promote involvement of staff in research and the generation of industry relevant research topics</p> <p>Invite and support current Honours, Masters and PhD students to present their research and personal journey to HDR enrolment as part of the CRHaCD research seminars</p> <p>Prepare PHC RED / SGRHS information packs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of industry partnership research grant applications</li> <li>• Number of presentations to PHC practitioners about research activity and career options</li> <li>• CRHaCD 2008 research seminar program</li> <li>• PHC RED / SGRHS information</li> </ul>

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS
	<p>for people interested in enrolling in PHC related research programs or research careers</p> <p>Maintain close links with the SGRHS, UniSA and Adelaide University post graduate student coordinators, providing them with PHC RED information packs for dissemination to students</p>	<p>packs</p>
<p><b>Support the sustainable advancement of Indigenous / Aboriginal PHC research careers</b></p>	<p><i>Continue to engage Aboriginal Primary Health Care Researchers</i></p> <p>Support CCRE by promoting their Introduction to Research Methods course in the Research Newsletter and when networking with local agencies</p> <p>Advertise the 2008 RDP program and Research Training Scholarships throughout Aboriginal Health Services network and SGRHS Aboriginal Health Unit using culturally sensitive and empowering material</p> <p>Encourage inclusion of Aboriginal health research presentation on CRHaCD research seminar program.</p> <p>Maintain regular contact with UniSA Indigenous Academic Advisor – Eugene Warrior to promote research subject options and enrolments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles in research newsletter about Aboriginal research achievements</li> <li>• CRHaCD research seminar program</li> <li>• Number of Indigenous research students enrolled at UniSA Whyalla</li> <li>• Promotional material targeting Aboriginal PHC practitioners</li> <li>• Number of workshops</li> <li>• Number of attendees at training workshops</li> </ul>

<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>INDICATORS</b>
<p><b>Support the SA/NT/GGT Collaboration</b></p>	<p>Attend Collaboration meetings Support State Annual Event</p> <p>Provide training workshops in research methodologies with the State Collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes of 4 Collaboration meetings noting SGRHS contribution</li> <li>• Number of presentation at the Annual Event</li> <li>• Number of RDPs collaboration training events</li> </ul>

**OBJECTIVE 2: To support early-MID career researchers to undertake more high quality primary health care research and ensure its relevance to policy and practice by aligning it with identified needs and priorities.**

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS
<p><b>Increase the amount of industry and policy driven research undertaken by RCBI by early-mid career researchers</b></p>	<p>Collaborate with Country Health SA and HACC funded agencies to develop pathways for Allied Health Professionals working in Community Health Services to be mentored by researchers affiliated with SGRHS / CRHaCD</p> <p>Collaborate with Divisions of General Practice SGRHS to develop pathways General Practitioners and Nurse Practitioners working in primary health to be mentored by researchers affiliated with SGRHS / CRHaCD</p> <p>Promote PHC RED tri-state events through Country Health SA and Divisions of GP network.</p> <p>Promote SGRHS continuing professional development program and research activities organised through PHCRED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records of meetings held with Country SA, HACC funded agencies and Divisions of General Practice that include discussions about research related strategies and collaborative projects</li> <li>• Record of correspondence and promotional material distributed about research training and related activities</li> <li>• 2008 Professional Development Training Schedule</li> <li>• 2008 Research Seminar Program</li> </ul>

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS
<p><b>Conduct high quality and policy relevant collaborative research in line with National, State and Local Government health priorities</b></p>	<p>Undertake at least one partnership projects with interested cohort members, and partners including Faculty of Health Sciences Adelaide University, Centre for Rural Health and Community Development (CRHaCD). Identify research questions, devise methodologies, apply for funding, undertake research and research evaluation. Projects currently being negotiated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary Health Care Needs of the Mid North South Australia region</li> <li>• Strategies than enable mental health service access by adolescents in need living in Whyalla and Eastern Eyre Peninsula</li> <li>• Finding new methods for improving rates of cervical cancer screening</li> </ul> <p>Include an information session about National Health Priorities in the CRHaCD / SGRHS 2008 Research Seminar Program and chair discussion about current and possible research questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of grant applications submitted</li> <li>• Number of successful applications</li> <li>• Number of collaborative research projects</li> <li>• Research Seminar Program including Health Priorities Presentation</li> </ul>

**OBJECTIVE 3: To disseminate and facilitate the uptake of evidence in policy and practice.**

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS
<p><b>Promote research that contributes to policy at a regional, State and National level</b></p>	<p>Promote local researchers areas of expertise to policy makers to encourage their inclusion on working parties and as consultants for evidence based practice and policy</p> <p>Distribute information and about local, state and national PHC research activity and forward this to local, State and Federal PHC policy makers.</p> <p>Undertake research with collaborators who will use the findings in practice or policy.</p> <p>Support RDP's and all researchers affiliated with PHC RED to disseminate research outcomes</p> <p>Present at regional, national, and international conferences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record of PHC research information distributed to policy makers</li> <li>• Number of presentations to health policy personnel</li> <li>• Number of collaborations with regional health service personnel with a focus on uptake of evidence</li> <li>• Participation in working parties to implement changed practices/policies</li> <li>• Number of papers published with explicit implications for health policy</li> <li>• Record of contact with SA Population Health Unit regarding dissemination of population health data to country SA practitioners</li> </ul>

<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>INDICATORS</b>
	<p>Collaborate with SA Population Health Unit, Country Health SA, Divisions of GP and PHC RIS to arrange local PHC network for the dissemination of epidemiological data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of publications: conference abstracts, papers publications, seminar presentations, information sheets</li> </ul>